AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims includes a complete listing of both allowed claims and amended claims and will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.   (Currently amended) A system to facilitate communications between parties, comprising:

a first component associated with a request for attentional resources of a contactee, the first component is a contactor data store that includes preferences of a contactor relating to the request; ~~and~~

a second component that facilitates a response to the request based in part on the utility of the request to the contactee., the second component is a contactee data store that includes preferences of the contactee relating to at least one of the request and the response; and

a contact manager to facilitate communications between the contactor and the contactee based in part on the preferences of the parties, the request and the response, the contact manager including decision-theoretic formulae to facilitate communications between the parties, the decision-theoretic formulae including the following equation:

$$A^* = \arg\max_j \sum_i p(\text{context}^R i \mid E) \times u(A_j, A_k^C, C, \text{context}^R i, \text{context}^C)$$

A_j is a communication modality being considered;

A_k^C is a communication modality employed by the contactor;

context^R_i is a context of the contactee;

context^C is a context of the contactor;

C is an identity of the contactor; and

$p(\text{context}^R_i \mid E)$ is a conditional probability that the contactee has a certain context given the evidence E and is employed with a utility function u to determine ideal communication actions that maximize the utility of communications between the contactor and the contactee.

2.   (Cancelled)

3.   (Cancelled)

4.   (Currently amended) The system of claim ~~2~~1, the request includes at least one of the contactor's capabilities, goals, tasks, schedules, priorities, deadlines, costs, and benefits in order to maximize the utility to the contactee.

5.   (Currently amended) The system of claim ~~2~~1, the response including at least one of the capabilities of the contactee, the contactee's preferences relating to the contactor's preferences and how the contactee prefers to be contacted, the preferences of being contacted varying in respect to the contactor over at least one of time and topics of communication.

6.   (Original) The system of claim 5, the contactee restricts communications of a selected group of contactor's over time *via* at least one of actions by the contactee and by modifying the preferences in the contactee preferences data store.

7.   (Currently amended) The system of claim ~~2~~1, the contactor optimizes at least one of a measure of priority and a measure of value to facilitate communications between the parties.

8.   (Currently amended) The system of claim ~~3~~1, the contact manager optimizes at least one of a measure of priority and a measure of value to facilitate communications between the parties.

9.   (Currently amended) The system of claim ~~2~~1, the preferences of at least one of the contactor and the contactee including at least one of a time of day for communicating, a time of week for communicating, identity of the contactor that includes the identity of unknown contactors, hardware currently available, hardware available within a time horizon of a communication attempt, software available, and interruptability information.

10.   (Currently amended) The system of claim 2<u>1</u>, the contactee data store including dynamically changing communication information relating to needs of the contactee.

11.   (Currently amended) The system of claim 3<u>1</u>, the contact manager facilitates communications between at least one of multiple parties and multiple communications channels.

12.   (Currently amended) The system of claim 3<u>1</u>, the contact manager enabling a dialog session between the contactor and the contactee to facilitate communications between the parties.

13.   (Currently amended) The system of claim 3<u>1</u>, the contact manager informs the contactee of the contactor's attempt to communicate, the contactee is provided with an opportunity to override current preferences in the contactee data store based on current capabilities of the contactee.

14.   (Currently amended) The system of claim 3<u>1</u>, the contactee is presented a list of options for being contacted *via* the contact manager.

15.   (Currently amended) The system of claim 3<u>1</u>, the contactor is presented with a list of communications options with high utilities determined in accordance with the preferences of the contactee *via* the contact manager.

16.   (Currently amended) The system of claim 3<u>1</u>, the contact manager is operably associated with at least one of an e-mail, a video transmission, a television transmission, a telephone, a mobile communications device, an instant message and a computing device.

17.   (Currently amended) The system of claim ~~2~~1, the contact manager including at least one of a set of rules, and a set policies, ~~and decision-theoretic formulae~~ to facilitate communications between the parties.

18.   (Cancelled)

19.   (Currently amended) A method to facilitate communications between parties, comprising:

　　　　communicating a first set of preferences to send information;

　　　　communicating a second set of preferences to receive the information; and

　　　　enabling communications between two or more parties based at least in part on the preferences, and decision-theoretic formulae, the decision-theoretic formulae including the following equation:

$$A^* = \arg\max_{j} \sum_{i} p(\text{context}^R\, i \mid E) \times u(A_j, A_k^C, C, \text{context}^R\, i, \text{context}^C)$$

A_j is a communication modality being considered;

A^C_k is a communication modality employed by a contactor;

context^R_i is a context of a contactee;

context^C is a context of the contactor;

C is an identity of the contactor; and

$p(\text{context}^R_i \mid E)$ is a conditional probability that the contactee has a certain context given the evidence E and is employed with a utility function u to determine ideal communication actions that maximize the utility of communications between the contactor and the contactee.

20.   (Original) The method of claim 19, further comprising transmitting one or more selection options from a first party requesting attentional resources of a second party, the communications between the parties based at least in part on the selected option.

21.   (Original) The method of claim 20, further comprising,

enabling at least one party to override the preferences in order to receive further communications from the first party.

22.   (Original) The method of claim 19, further comprising,

transmitting a list of options to at least one party, the list arranged according the communications preferences of at least one other party.

23.   (Original) The method of claim 19, further comprising,

enabling a dialog session between the parties to facilitate further communications between the parties.

24.   (Original) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the acts of claim 19.

25.   (Currently amended) A system to facilitate communications between parties, comprising:

means for specifying preferences to send and receive communications;

means for transmitting one or more selection options requesting the attention of at least one party *via* the communications; and

means for enabling further communications between the parties based at least in part on the preferences ~~and~~ the selected option, and decision-theoretic formulae, the decision-theoretic formulae including the following equation:

$$A^* = \arg\max_{j} \sum_{i} p(\text{context}^R i \mid E) \times u(A_j, A_k^C, C, \text{context}^R i, \text{context}^C)$$

A_j is a communication modality being considered;

A_k^C is a communication modality employed by a contactor;

context^R_i is a context of a contactee;

context^C is a context of the contactor;

C is an identity of the contactor; and

$p(\text{context}^R{}_i \mid E)$ is a conditional probability that the contactee has a certain context given the evidence E and is employed with a utility function u to determine ideal communication actions that maximize the utility of communications between the contactor and the contactee.

26.   (Cancelled)

27.   (Cancelled)

28.   (Currently amended) A system to facilitate unsolicited communications between parties, comprising:

a contact manager to transmit an offer to communicate from an unknown contactor to a contactee; ~~and~~, the contact manager including decision-theoretic formulae, the decision-theoretic formulae including the following equation:

$$A^* = \arg\max_j \sum_i p(\text{context}^R i \mid E) \times u(A_j, A_k^C, C, \text{context}^R i, \text{context}^C)$$

A_j is a communication modality being considered;

$A^C{}_k$ is a communication modality employed by the contactor;

$\text{context}^R{}_i$ is a context of the contactee;

context^C is a context of the contactor;

C is an identity of the contactor; and

$p(\text{context}^R{}_i \mid E)$ is a conditional probability that the contactee has a certain context given the evidence E and is employed with a utility function u to determine ideal communication actions that maximize the utility of communications between the contactor and the contactee; and

a preference component associated with the contactee to enable an acceptance of the offer based in part upon consideration presented in the offer.

29.   (Original) The system of claim 28, further comprising a preference component associated with the unknown contactor to describe one or more parameters of the offer.

30.   (Original) The system of claim 28, the offer includes a request to at least one of listen, view, examine and interact with at least one of a commercial, political ad, survey, and infomercial.

31.   (Original) The system of claim 28, the consideration includes at least one of money, gifts, rebates, perks, and discounts on other items.

32.   (Original) The system of claim 28, the contact manager automatically disables further communications with the unknown contactor based upon settings in the preference component associated with the contactee.

33.   (Original) The system of claim 32, the contact manager provides feedback to the unknown contactor indicating whether communications are established with the contactee.

34.   (Original) The system of claim 28, at least one of the contact manager and the contactee enable further communications *via* acceptance of the offer.

35.   (Original) The system of claim 34, the acceptance includes an agreement to communicate in the future.

36.   (Original) The system of claim 34, the acceptance is based upon past consideration.

37.   (Original) The system of claim 28, the preference component enables a predetermined amount of messages to be received from a predetermined number of message sources.

38.   (Original) The system of claim 28, the contact manager enables a dialog session to facilitate an agreement to communicate between the unknown contactor and the contactee.

39.   (Original) The system of claim 28, further comprising an agreement component to at least one of arrange parameters, modalities, times, topics, and value between the unsolicited contactor and the contactee.

40.   (Original) The system of claim 39, further comprising a receipt component to monitor properties of the agreement between the unsolicited contactor and the contactee.

41.   (Original) The system of claim 40, further comprising a consideration calculator to adjust one or more parameters of the agreement.

42.   (Currently amended) A method to facilitate communications between unknown parties, comprising:

transmitting an offer having at least one incentive to induce communications between parties;

analyzing preference data associated with at least one of the parties; and

establishing communications between the parties based at least in part on the preference data, the at least one incentive, ~~and~~ actions between the parties~~.~~ and decision-theoretic formulae, the decision-theoretic formulae including the following equation:

$$A^* = \arg\max_j \sum_i p(\text{context}^R i \mid E) \times u(A_j, A_k^C, C, \text{context}^R i, \text{context}^C)$$

A_j is a communication modality being considered;

A_k^C is a communication modality employed by a contactor;

context^R_i is a context of a contactee;

context^C is a context of the contactor;

C is an identity of the contactor; and

$p(\text{context}^R_i \mid E)$ is a conditional probability that the contactee has a certain context given the evidence E and is employed with a utility function u to determine ideal communication actions that maximize the utility of communications between the contactor and the contactee.

43.   (Original) The method of claim 42, further comprising determining whether to present the offer to one of the parties based on the preference data.

44.   (Original) The method of claim 43, further comprising disabling further communications between the parties based on the preference data.

45.   (Original) The method of claim 42, further comprising providing feedback to at least one of the parties regarding the ability of the other party to communicate.

46.   (Original) The method of claim 42, further comprising establishing a dialog to enable further negotiations of the offer.

47.   (Original) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the acts of claim 42.

48.   (Currently amended) A system to facilitate communications between unknown parties, comprising:

        means for transmitting an offer to induce communications between parties;

        means for analyzing preference data associated with at least one of the parties;

        means for establishing communications between the parties based at least in part on the preference data, ~~and~~ actions between the parties~~.~~ and decision-theoretic formulae, the decision-theoretic formulae including the following equation:

$$A^* = \arg\max_j \sum_i p(\text{context}^R i \mid E) \times u(A_j, A_k^C, C, \text{context}^R i, \text{context}^C)$$

A_j is a communication modality being considered;

A_k^C is a communication modality employed by a contactor;

$\text{context}^R{}_i$ is a context of a contactee;

context^C is a context of the contactor;

C is an identity of the contactor; and

$p(\text{context}^R{}_i \mid E)$ is a conditional probability that the contactee has a certain context given the evidence E and is employed with a utility function u to determine ideal

communication actions that maximize the utility of communications between the contactor and the contactee; and

means for negotiating the offer.

49.   (Cancelled)

50.   (Cancelled)

51.   (Cancelled)

52.   (Cancelled)

53.   (Cancelled)

54.   (Cancelled)